WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

New Employment Oriented Scheme

† 544. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no solution has been found for the problem of unemployment despite efforts by Government;

(b) if so. whether keeping in view this fact Government are contemplating to formulate any new employment oriented scheme; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) National Sample Surveys show that unemployment reduced from 2.62 per cent of labour force in 1987-88 to 1.90 per cent in 1993-94, and further to 1.81 per cent in 1997.

(b) and (c) A number of schemes to increase work opportunities for low income groups and weaker sections exist. Some of these have been restructured recently. A new scheme called Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) is being introduced from the current year which will create new opportunities for employment.

Fishermen Detained in Pak Jails

† 545. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fishermen of Indian origin who have been detained in jails affer being caught by the Pakistani coastal guards during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the number of fishermen who have so far been brought back through negotiations or other measures by Government;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) by when remaining fishermen are likely to be brought back in the country;

(d) whether most of the fishermen detained in the Pakistani jails belong to Maharashtra State; and

(e) if so, what are the details of the enquiry conducted by Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRl JASWANT SINGH)) : (a) According to available information, the number of Indian fishermen held in Pakistani custody, after being apprehended by the Pakistani Maritime Security Agency, during the last three years, is as follows:

1997	40
1998	187
1999-till 29-4-2000	168

In addition, 19 Indian fishermen were pushed from Iran to Pakistan in 1999 and thereafter held in Pakistani custody.

(b) During the same period, the release and repatriation of 570 Indian fishermen to India has been secured. This figure includes Indian fishermen apprehended prior to 1997 and thereafter held in custody by the Pakistani authorities.

(c) Government is in continuous contact with Pakistan through diplomatic channels for securing the earliest release and repatriation of the remaining fishermen.

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

Annual Growth rate of Agricultural production

† 546. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH :

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have set a target of 4.5 per cent annual growth rate of agricultural production in the country during the coming years;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.